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# Man of many names has

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## police puzzled

Federal agents may not be absolutely certain who Juan Battaglia-Ponte is or when he was born, but they are certain he is not an FBI, CIA or DEA agent, a foreign diplomat or a commander in the Argentine Navy, despite his credentials.

Battaglia-Ponte's CIA credentials, seized along with him Thursday, bear his photo and "the seal of the Central Intelligence Agency," said Inspector Peter Nagurny of the U.S. Marshal's office.

"They appear to be authentic," but they are not, Nagurny said. "He is being charged with not working for the CIA."

Battaglia-Ponte was arrested outside a Miami apartment Thursday afternoon by U.S. marshals and police. They say they found he had three dates of birth, five identities, at least two current wives and a loaded Uzi submachine gun.

"The reason for this man's purpose was of a fraudulent nature," Nagurny said. The alleged fraud, he said, will be pursued by Metro-Dade police.

Federal officials, who had been looking for Battaglia-Ponte, describe him as average height and average weight, with brown hair, eyeglasses and "the ability to blend in with his surroundings."

After an intensive 36-hour surveillance by seven marshals staking out two Miami addresses, Battaglia-Ponte was nabbed outside an apartment at 501 NW 57th Ave. after he walked up to his car and opened the door.

The auto, a nondescript 1982 gray Ford Fairmont was rigged with tell-tale radio antennas outside and a microphone inside, much like FBI agents' cars, police said. The equipment, however, was not connected. There was no radio, according to police, only the appearance of one.

Two programmable walkie-talkies were seized, as well as a stack of folders marked to indicate that they are "official investigative FBI files," Nagurny said. He declined to reveal what those "FBI files" contained.

Battaglia-Ponte, born in Uruguay in either 1955, 1945 or 1942, depending on his various documents, was carrying four sets of identification — despite the fact that he was wearing only jogging shorts, sandals and a pullover shirt, agents said. One set identified him as being affiliated with George Washington University in Washing-

ton, D.C., investigators said.

Nagurny said the suspect's weeping wife — "one of two in Miami that we know of" — consented to a search of the apartment she and Battaglia-Ponte shared.

"We don't know if they (the Miami wives) know of each other," Nagurny said. "There is no divorce that we can determine. There is also a possible third wife in the Northeast."

Inside the modest NW 57th Avenue apartment, agents say they found the loaded Uzi, a .38-caliber revolver, ammunition and Battaglia-Ponte's CIA credentials. Some documents were also seized, but searchers were unable to find FBI credentials, they said. "We have reason to believe he did have a set," said Nagurny.

Agents said Battaglia-Ponte is on parole (until 1986) from a federal prison in Danbury, Conn., following a conviction for impersonating foreign diplomats and ambassadors.

He is wanted in Pennsylvania on charges of impersonating a commander in the Argentine navy and for posing as an agent of the FBI, the CIA and the DEA. He has also posed as an Immigration and Naturalization Services officer, marshals

said.

According to a Pennsylvania larceny affidavit, Battaglia-Ponte — in full Argentine naval attache regalia — rented a limousine, failed to pay the \$1,700 fee, installed a red light "similar to those used by police," in the auto, and stole cash, a diamond ring, a full length mink coat and a portable TV among other items.

The marshals had no information Thursday, they said, on how long Battaglia-Ponte was in Miami or what he planned to gain, if anything, with his nondescript gray Ford, faked FBI files and various identities. They have their suspicions.

"We do know that on once occasion he identified himself with official credentials and carried a weapon on a commercial airliner between New York, Atlanta and Miami," Nagurny said.

Held without bond Thursday, Battaglia-Ponte will appear at 10 a.m. today before U.S. Magistrate Peter Nimkoff.